

FE Week

8
JOBS
PAGES

UTCs RUNNING AT 10 PER CENT FULL AS ENROLMENT PLUMMETS

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EXCLUSIVE

A number of University Technical Colleges (UTCs) were running at around 10 per cent capacity last academic year — while the overall enrolment figure plummeted to just 30 per cent, *FE Week* can reveal.

The figures, supplied to *FE Week* under the Freedom of Information Act, show there were 9,460 places in total available in UTCs, but just 2,857 were filled.

All of the 17 UTCs operating in 2013/14 were undersubscribed, with the highest running at 81 per cent capacity before the next highest was half empty.

A Department of Education (DfE) spokesperson said that with most UTCs having only opened last year, they were “not expected to reach their capacity for a number of years”. But despite this, and despite the low enrolment numbers, he insisted the “recruitment picture is improving dramatically”.

Nevertheless, the poor figures will also come as a huge blow to the Baker Dearing Educational Trust, which oversees UTCs, having seen overall enrolment in 2012/13 at 57 per cent. And Hackney UTC has already revealed it will not be reopening next September having attracted just 29 of its target of 75 pupils for 2014/15.

A spokesperson for the Baker Dearing Trust said she was “confident that as the

UTCs themselves become more established... recruitment will increase.”

The UTC project was launched in 2011 — two years before colleges were able to recruit full-time learners from the age of 14 — and has enjoyed cross-party support. Chancellor George Osborne described them as “a key part of the government’s long-term economic plan,” while Shadow Education Secretary Tristram Hunt called for “considerable growth” in the number of UTCs.

However, their Ofsted grades have not justified such positive backing. Of the five inspections to date, one resulted in an inadequate rating, two were deemed to require improvement, while the fourth and fifth were graded as good.

And with a further 13 UTCs having opened this month, and a planned total of 57 by 2016, the Association of Colleges (AoC) called for a rethink on UTCs. Gill Clipson, AoC deputy chief executive, said: “The government should assess how well the current UTCs are working before announcing the creation of even more.” She added: “Some local councils have been less than enthusiastic about advertising UTCs to their local community.”

Lynne Sedgmore, executive director of the 157 Group, said: “These figures would suggest most UTCs are significantly under-recruiting against targets, which considering the publicity and resources put into them is most surprising. I would be interested to know the reasons, particularly as Hackney closed due

Education Secretary Nicky Morgan warned of ‘frustration’ over DfE U-turn on FE free meal top-ups

National student services chair writes hard-hitting email to Secretary of State (pictured).

See page 4 to read the full correspondence



Dear Ms Morgan,

I can tell you there is widespread frustration with the Department for Education’s U-turn over FE free meals funding.

The initial guidance provided earlier this year over how the meals should be funded was unclear and I know that many colleges had been planning to top-up their £2.41-per-student allocation with money from the 16 to 19 Bursary fund — some to £2.50, some to £3 and at least one up to £5.

They had to re-write their plans after the Education Funding Agency told colleges that such top-ups were not allowed two weeks ago.

Now, colleges are looking at the issue all over again with your department having changed its mind to say top-ups are okay after all.

Yours,
Polly Harrow

Chair of National Association for Managers of Student Services

to such low numbers.”

University and College Union head of FE Andrew Harden said: “Many UTCs may offer similar courses and curriculum to existing FE colleges. At a time when our colleges are facing huge budget cuts it is essential that vital funding is not diverted at the expense of institutions already providing key vocational training. Considering the considerable expense and fanfare that has surrounded UTCs it must be disappointing for all involved that take-up has not been better.”

The DfE spokesperson said: “UTCs, their university partners and businesses should work together to ensure they are offering an attractive and distinct alternative to other schools.”

The Baker Dearing Educational Trust

spokesperson said: “The technical education pathway offered by UTCs is wholly new to the English school system and we expected it would take time for them to reach their maximum capacity.

“We are confident that as the UTCs themselves become more established, as the JCB Academy has done since it opened in 2010 [as an academy, before becoming a UTC in January last year], recruitment will increase. The majority of UTCs opened in 2013 and it is a challenge to recruit students to a new school at the non-standard age of 14, even though this is the right age.”

Visit feweek.co.uk for the full list of UTC enrolment and capacity figures for 2013/14

See editor’s comment on page 6

ADMINISTRATION HITS
800 APPRENTICES



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COLLEGE VAT
VICTORY (FOR NOW)



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BACK AT WORK



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IFL JOBS AT RISK

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The future of more than a dozen Institute for Learning (IfL) jobs was today looking uncertain as it prepares to transfer assets to the Education and Training Foundation (ETF) before closing.

A spokesperson for the IfL told *FE Week* that there was no guarantee that any of its 15 workers would keep their jobs following the move, voted through by its non-executive board two months ago.

The transfer is expected to be complete by the end of next month, and an HR consultation is underway to determine the fate of IfL employees.

However, an IfL spokesperson told *FE Week*: “The ETF is not taking over the IfL organisation and staff — the plan is for IfL to transfer its legacy, assets and membership to the ETF through a deed of gift before closing its operations.”

She was unable to guarantee that any IfL jobs would be saved, adding: “In view of the current HR consultation process, IfL does not consider it appropriate to make comments about staff and potential redundancies at this time.”

The transfer was triggered by fears the 33,500-member IfL did not have enough cash to keep going. It has seen huge numbers of members desert in the face of increasing membership fees in response to government funding being withdrawn.

However, the vote in favour of transfer was later hit with claims IfL had failed to consult rank-and-file members.

A number of IfL members complained that they were not involved in the decision, before IfL elected chair Sue Crowley (pictured) defended the process.

She said members, who generally paid £63 annual fees, were democratically represented by the advisory board members who took the vote.

It comes just a week after it was revealed the IfL’s Qualified Teacher Learning Status (QTLS) programme would continue under the ETF. The news came in a live webcast by Dr Jean Kelly, IfL chief executive, and ETF chief executive David Russell.

Dr Kelly said: “It will still be called QTLS, it will stay as it is for the foreseeable future. It’s there for people to apply and it will remain the status it has been since it has been in existence.”

Mr Russell announced the next window for members to apply to begin the QTLS process would open from December.

He added it was likely teachers who transferred from IfL would need to remain as fully-paid up members of the ETF to keep their QTLS.

The ETF declined to comment on the potential job losses among IfL staff.



FE WEEK NEWS IN BRIEF

Colleges ‘shut’ sixth forms

An inquiry into academy conflicts of interest has reported anecdotal evidence of FE colleges pressing in “their own interest” to close sixth forms they sponsor.

The Education Select Committee, in its Conflicts of interest in academy sponsorship arrangements, reported that: “Several interviewees gave examples of secondary academies being sponsored by an FE college and being pressurised to close their sixth form.”

However, it also acknowledged how interviewees said this could be over legitimate concerns about quality or insufficient learners.

Coffee and space at NCS

Would-be baristas, astronauts, personal shoppers and bomb disposal technicians can now get careers information from the National Careers Service (NCS) website.

According to the Skills Funding Agency, the NCS has added the four jobs to its list of more than 800 different job profiles.

Each profile explains the skills and qualifications needed for a role, what the work involves, the average salary and a section on career prospects.

Two-grade Ofsted leap

A London-based training provider has leapt from an Ofsted inadequate to good rating.

Prevista got a grade four result in June 2013 with a report highlighting “weak” management.

But now the 500-learner provider has bounced back with a grade two result praising management’s “vigour and purpose”.

Managing director James Clements Smith said Prevista had been on a “huge learning curve” to “re-align our values and ensure we put learners at the centre of everything we do”.

College wins second round in VAT fight - third round next

@FCDWHITTAKER
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Hopes of a multi-million pound VAT rebate for principals have been boosted by a Hampshire college’s second legal win against the taxman over a training restaurant — but a third courtroom battle is on the cards, *FE Week* can reveal.

Brockenhurst College was awarded around £55,000 in February after it was found the supplies for its on-site training restaurant, MJ’s, were integral to educating students — and so should have been exempt from VAT.

Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs (HMRC) appealed against the ruling (see cartoon, right) — with the figure representing a refund of four years’ worth of tax payments on supplies to the 50-seater training restaurant staffed by students and open to the public — but lost.

The defeat for the taxman has prompted calls for principals to get their claims for cash in now with a four-year time limit to refunds, before HMRC lawyers take up the case for third time, at the Court of Appeal in five months.

Brockenhurst College principal



FE Week cartoon from April, edition 100, about HMRC trying to claim back the VAT rebate

Di Roberts (pictured) has said she planned to plough the windfall back into the college, but she declined to comment on the latest development.

With more than 160 colleges in England operating similar facilities, plus other training enterprises such as hair salons, spas and theatres, successful payback campaigns in the vein of Brockenhurst’s could therefore net the college sector tens of millions of pounds.

Inquiry into ‘ineffective’ delivery as Pearson withholds qualifications

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City of Bristol College was today due to conclude an internal investigation over its “ineffective” delivery of an aerospace engineering BTec course that prompted awarding organisation (AO) Pearson to withhold qualifications.

The AO wants work done by City of Bristol College learners to be resubmitted, saying it had a “duty to ensure standards are upheld”.

The college has accepted it was at fault and said it was acting to get the learners back on track, with hopes to issue the certificates next month.

An internal investigation has also already been launched at the college into what went wrong, and was due to report back today (Monday, September 22).

Principal Lynn Merilion (pictured) told *FE Week*: “We have not been effective in delivering this programme and we are working flat out to get the students where they need to be.”

She added the college had not been quick enough to respond to parents’ initial concerns and said “system error in communication, feedback and reviewing student

progress” and “some aspects of teaching” could have caused the issues.

It comes as a blow to the college, which had been celebrating Ofsted success in June as it climbed to a “requires improvement judgement” having slumped from an grade two result to a four last year.

Nevertheless, Ms Merilion said: “One of the reasons for doing the investigation is we have had 300 students finish their programme this year and we need to ask, is it a systems flaw?”

Of the 26 students, 22 needed to submit work, she said.

“The other students may have some minor adjustments to do following verification,” she added.

A spokesperson for Pearson said: “City of Bristol College is currently unable to issue results to their students that have taken the aeronautical programme. We are working with the college to ensure that any outstanding quality issues are resolved.

“We regret any distress that this is causing to students at the college, but we have a duty to ensure standards are upheld nationally so that students, universities and employers can remain confident about the performance of students who complete our courses.”

Pay strike could face AoC legal challenge over year old ballot

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The Association of Colleges (AoC) could challenge the legality of plans for University and College Union (UCU) members to strike over pay next month.

The AoC announced it was proceeding with a pay deal without UCU blessing, and it in turn said it would continue with strike action over pay on October 14 — despite the fact the five other unions in the national joint forum (NJJF) had accepted the deal.

According to the AoC, the AMIE, ATL, GMB, UNISON and Unite the Union agreed to its offer, which includes the removal of the lowest pay grade, a 2 per cent rise to £7.65 an-hour for staff on the lowest remaining grade and a 1 per cent rise for all other grades.

But the UCU, which had been holding out for a 3 per cent deal, still plans to strike, prompting the AoC to investigate whether the industrial action, which it claims is based on a ballot held nearly a year ago, was legal.

In a letter to AoC members, acting director of employment policy and services Marc Whitworth (pictured) said: “UCU will be relying on their November 2013 ballot for action regarding the 2013/14 pay dispute.

“With colleges facing significant financial pressures, AoC’s final recommendation of a 1 per cent pay increase, with no conditions, is a fair balance between rewarding staff and maintaining the financial well-being of

Association of Employment and Learning Providers chief executive Stewart Segal said his members might also be affected.

He said: “In the independent sector every company has a different structure in terms of how VAT laws apply to them ranging from large PLCs where there may a group structure to small charities.

“As a result, it is very difficult to know what the impact of any changes to the interpretation of VAT laws would be.

“In this specific case, independent learning providers do not tend to run training facilities that sell their services as they are more likely to place trainees with employers, but there may be some specific cases where this will have an impact.”

HMRC said it was appealing again having lost, but admitted it would have to consider refunds for colleges “in the same position” as Brockenhurst.

A spokesperson for HMRC said: “We have appealed the decision of the upper tribunal to the Court of Appeal. The court has listed the case to start on February 16, 2015.”

They added: “As the matter is under appeal, HMRC will also issue assessments in such cases to protect their position if ultimately HMRC is successful in the litigation.

“HMRC will issue a revenue and customs brief to explain how any colleges in an identical position can make claims as well as provide further guidance.”



colleges where possible.

“At a time in which colleges are focusing on inducting students and prioritising services for the new academic year this is also an unwelcome distraction for colleges locally.

“AoC is currently taking advice on the validity of UCU’s ballot for industrial action and colleges will be kept informed of how this issue progresses.”

UCU head of bargaining Michael MacNeil (pictured) said: “Our consultation showed an overwhelming rejection of the employers’ offer which didn’t deal with our ongoing dispute.

“We would rather the employers spent time addressing the need to stop year after year of real terms pay cuts for staff, instead of threatening court action to block strike action.”

NEWS

Student services leader criticises DfE over ‘costly’ handling of FE free meal top-ups

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Education Secretary Nicky Morgan has felt the full force of college student service leaders’ frustration over her department’s handling of FE free meals top-up rules.

Polly Harrow (pictured), chair of the National Association for Managers of Student Services (NAMSS), has written a powerful email to Ms Morgan outlining how a Department for Education (DfE) U-turn on the policy had proved “extremely costly and time-consuming” for colleges.

The DfE issued new guidelines on Monday (September 15) stating that the FE free meal figure of £2.41 per learner could be boosted from the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund and other sources — just a fortnight after telling colleges they couldn’t.

“I can tell you there is widespread frustration with the Department for Education’s U-turn over FE free meals funding,” wrote Ms Harrow, whose correspondence was seen by *FE Week*.

She added: “All this planning and re-planning has been extremely costly and time-consuming to colleges from an administrative perspective. It is also extremely frustrating.”

A DfE spokesperson, who confirmed change in the policy,” said it would now be possible, for example, to give a learner in the FE free meal a further £2.41 to be given from other sources, including



From: Polly Harrow [National Association for Managers of Student Services]
Sent: 18 September 2014
To: Education Secretary Nicky Morgan
Subject: FE free meals DfE U-turn frustration

Dear Ms Morgan,

We at the National Association for Managers of Student Services (NAMSS) represent college staff at more than 80 per cent of colleges in this country and I can tell you there is widespread frustration with the Department for Education’s U-turn over FE free meals funding.

We fully support the introduction of FE free meals for underprivileged learners. All we have wanted is clarity and consistency of guidance over how they should be funded.

The initial guidance provided earlier this year over how the meals should be funded was unclear and I know that dozens of colleges had been planning to top-up their £2.41-per-student allocation with money from the 16 to 19 Bursary fund — some to £2.50, some to £3 and at least one up to £5.

They had to re-write their plans after the Education Funding Agency told colleges that such top-ups were not allowed two weeks ago.

Now, colleges are looking at the issue all over again with your department having changed its mind to say top-ups are okay after all.

All this planning and re-planning has been extremely costly and time-consuming to colleges from an administrative perspective. It is also extremely frustrating.

We are still unclear over the ambiguous nature of the most recent guidance and would like to discuss this with the DfE.

As providers we will have to “consider the value for money and reasonableness of such an enhancement to the £2.41 rate and must be able to justify this”.

But are we supposed to know what a reasonable cost is before we think about justifying it? And how should we evidence that justification?

We will of course do our best to put this welcome policy into action and urge the government not to make any other changes in the meantime.

Yours

Polly Harrow
Chair of National Association for Managers of Student Services

the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund, to have a meal to the value of £3.

The change in policy, he said, had been “decided to give them [providers] more freedom to their budgets for what they want to

use them for”.

It means colleges that had originally been planning to top up the FE free meals handout before the Education Funding Agency told them they couldn’t, are reconsidering.

Among those told FE free meal top-ups were not allowed, before being told they were allowed, was Kingston College. Its principal, Peter Mayhew-Smith, told *FE Week*: “The recent change to the guidance on free meals has caused us some challenges as we now have to change the communication we’ve shared with our students again. We will do this and make sure we give our students the very best support and financial assistance we can offer.”

New College Durham confirmed it would top-up free meal funding to £2.50 and a Middlesbrough College spokesperson said: “Staff are now exploring funding sources for topping up”.

However, Ms Harrow told Ms Morgan that further clarification was needed on this point to determine how much topping up was acceptable.

She wrote: “We have been told we will have to ‘consider the value for money and reasonableness of such an enhancement to the £2.41 rate and must be able to justify this’.

“But are we supposed to know what a reasonable cost is before we think about justifying it?”

A DfE spokesperson declined to comment on criticism of its handling of FE free meals top-up rules, but said: “All colleges are free to use up to 5 per cent of their bursary to cover the admin costs of verifying students’ eligibility for free meals.”

Survey looks at maths teachers’ quals and pay

A survey of the FE workforce has found that around one-in-five maths teachers are only qualified up to level two in the subject.

Reports based on the results of the survey have been published by the Education and Training Foundation (ETF).

They show the highest maths qualification held by 17.1 per cent of maths teachers was level two functional or adult basic skills.

Association of Colleges acting director of employment services and policy Marc Whitworth said: “Colleges work hard to ensure teachers have the skills, qualifications and experience to deliver good education to students.”

He also pointed out only a third of colleges responded to the survey.

“ETF needs to continue its dialogue with the sector to discuss the value of collecting and presenting this sort of workforce information,” he said.

The survey also found the average full-time pay for all FE college staff in 2012/13 was £26,630 and for teaching staff the average was £29,647.

However, University and College Union head of FE Andrew Harden said: “The large number of responses from the best-paid region, London, and the small responses from the worst-paid areas might suggest the pay for many staff is less than reported.”

Funding details ‘missing’ from Lars

The Skills Funding Agency has been in a race against time to update its online database with funding details for new apprenticeship frameworks before the R02 data collection window opened today (September 22).

The agency’s Learning Aims Reference Service (Lars), which helps providers choose which qualifications to deliver, lists the new apprenticeship framework offers — but some awarding organisation funding details have been missing.

An agency spokesperson told *FE Week*: “The agency has received a significant number of changes to apprenticeship frameworks. We are currently working through these amendments to ensure each framework has been approved and then can be funded.”

Providers need to decide which awards they offer in time to submit their R02 funding claims by October 4. The agency spokesperson said: “The majority of changed apprenticeship frameworks will be updated on Lars for the start of the R02 data collection today. We are working with the issuing authorities to resolve queries on the remaining frameworks.”

A list of funding-approved frameworks which are not yet on Lars is available on the agency’s website, she said.

A spokesperson for NCFE, which has been affected, said: “We would like to assure centres that these qualifications have been confirmed as eligible for funding.”

Has your awarding organisation been affected?
Email news@feweek.co.uk

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FE WEEK COMMENT

Capacity for review

With 2012/13’s UTC enrolment figures showing they were running, in total, at 57 per cent capacity, you would have expected a hint of caution in the corridors of power.

And armed with last year’s even lower figure of 30 per cent, you might even expect serious questions to be raised by government ministers and officials.

But not so, it would seem — to the extent that a DfE spokesperson said UTC recruitment was “improving dramatically”.

It’s hard to see this as a comment made in light of the facts, but regardless, UTCs continue to count on the support of Labour and the Conservatives.

But then there’s also the quality argument. And on this UTCs don’t stand up particularly well either — certainly not when, as previously stated in this column, compared to the offer from general FE colleges, where inspections of 14 to 16 provision have yielded complimentary reports at Hull College and Middlesbrough College, among others.

And although it seemed former Education Secretary Michael Gove appreciated this when he called on Bedford College to step in and rescue the grade four-rated Central Bedfordshire UTC, we appear no closer to a critical analysis of the UTC project.

But the AoC has called for such an assessment. So does *FE Week*.

Chris Henwood
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TOP FE FREE MEAL TWEETS

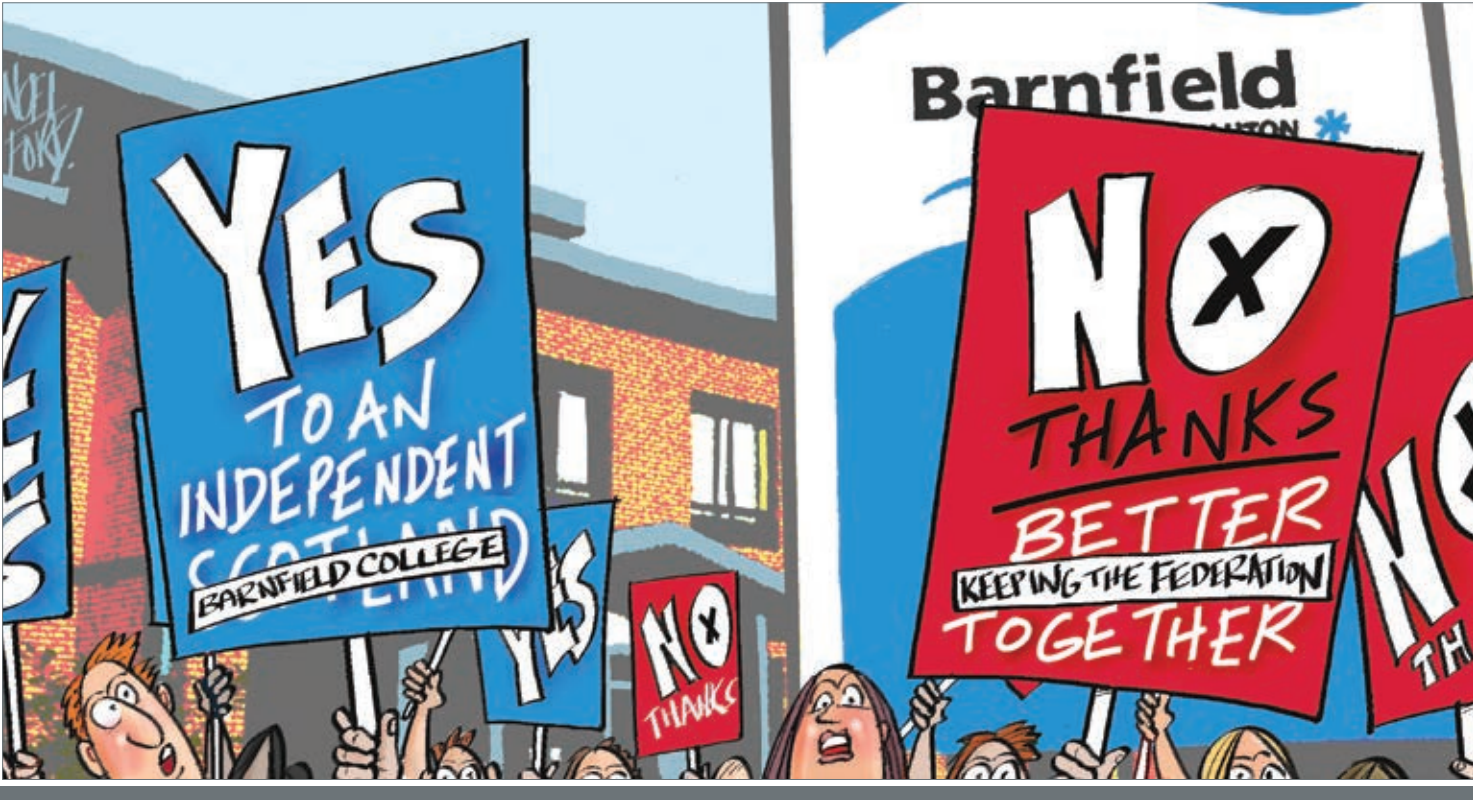
@ajsayers: No such thing as an FE free lunch. £2.41 won't buy much unless you like egg & cress

@SFCA_info: Updated guidance on free meals in FE, page 8 point 33 - you can use the bursary to top up the £2.41 funding rate

@HarlowCollege: Harlow MP Robert Halfon is “over the moon” that poorer @HarlowCollege students will soon get free meals

@SGSLTDinspire: “DfE U-turn on FE free meals policy puts top-ups back on menu” common sense prevails.#ukfchat

@educationgovuk: 16 to 18-year-old college students whose parents claim certain benefits should contact their college to find out how to get their free meals



Minister to rule on Barnfield split after public say

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Skills Minister Nick Boles will rule on plans for Barnfield College to leave the Barnfield Federation once a public consultation on the proposed split finishes next month, *FE Week* can reveal.

The Bedfordshire-based federation announced in July its plans for the college to leave the group and its associated schools in a move that would mean the end of the eight-year-old federation.

The final decision rests with Mr Boles, but the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) confirmed that no ruling would be made until a six-week public consultation on the split finishes on October 10. The split is expected to take place by December should the proposal win ministerial approval.

A BIS spokesperson told *FE Week*: “The Barnfield Federation wrote to ministers on July 28 setting out its plans to bring all five of its academies under one single Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) and for that MAT to legally

separate from Barnfield’s sponsorship.

“The Skills Funding Agency [SFA] and Education Funding Agency [EFA] continue to support the college and the academy trusts and have advised on the steps required to bring about such a separation. A public consultation on the proposed change has started and will run until October 10.”

The move continues to leave a question mark over the future of federation interim chief executive Dame Jackie Fisher, who replaced previous federation leaders Helen Mayhew and Stephen Hall in February. She is to continue in her role until the possible split, at which point the two organisations were expected to appoint their own chief executives.

The announcement of the split proposals came after the SFA and EFA both published critical findings of their investigations into the federation in February.

FE Commissioner David Collins also visited and called for at least half the governors to be replaced and for “significant changes” to the federation’s leadership.

The Barnfield Federation was unavailable

for comment, but in a statement released in July, a spokesperson said the decision to split the organisation was “not taken lightly”.

She said: “We are grateful for the hard work and exemplary commitment of our staff who can now put the past behind them and look forward to the future.”

And the consultation document says: “The Boards of each Academy Trust and the Board of Barnfield College are jointly of the opinion that to best service the educational and training needs of the people of Luton two wholly separate organisations should be put in place.

“Barnfield College would cease being the sponsor of the Academy Trusts... Barnfield College would revert to an FE college able to focus all its energies on further and higher education provision. This process is planned to be completed over the next few months with a view to establishing a single stand-alone Barnfield Multi Academy Trust by December 2014.”

Visit <http://moorlands.barnfield.ac.uk/> for more details and to take part.

COMMENTS

GCSE failure as Wilshaw sounds alarm bells

Perhaps a wider understanding of the reasons ‘why’ young people do not achieve first time round might help.

Those involved in 19+ education have been trying to pick up the pieces of this for years and as fashionable quals come and go (Functional Skills one day, GCSEs the next) and funding pressures continue to be applied (removal of basic skills uplift, change in funding method, allocation cuts etc) the amount of tuition time that learners receive is always squeezed.

It’s also likely that for some people attaining a GCSE A* to C is never going to happen for a number of different reasons. Ignoring that doesn’t make it any less true even if it’s seen as not being politically correct. So bandying around percentages without recognition of this is, at best, misleading. In my view, to blame the situation on a particular part of the sector is

pretty myopic.

When Functional Skills were taken out of MLP (now minimum standards) what did they think would happen?

Providers were effectively herded toward that type of delivery, largely as the correct funding wasn’t / isn’t in place.

Country Bumpkin

“Too few students make sufficient progress in improving their skills in English and mathematics, because the teaching they receive is simply not good enough,” he said.

A ridiculous statement. Many young people, not children, are not taking responsibility for their education.

They don’t turn up, don’t use the library, don’t read and don’t do any maths at home. Little wonder that so many employers feel young people are not ready for work.

FE Lecturer

Sector responds to MPs’ adult numeracy and literacy report

I agree with Carol Taylor’s comments and in particular the need to give people, with the lowest skills, the confidence to access opportunities.

This vital aspect of adult education has been slowly decreasing for decades. Providing access to education does not begin with literacy and numeracy classes it begins with increasing a learner’s self-awareness, confidence and the raising of aspiration.

I wonder how many of us still have the skills to provide the aspects of community education previously used to engage with disadvantaged people?

Most of us have been side tracked into vocational training which is inaccessible for so many.

Barbara Seymour

NEWS

Fraudster cash goes toward apprenticeships return

@FCDWHITTAKER
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A council in Bedfordshire will use the ill-gotten gains of a junk mail fraudster to bring back its apprenticeship programme.

Bedford Borough Council has announced it will partner with Bedford College to use £450,000 of the money confiscated from Hendrick Meniru (pictured) to employ 15 apprentices.

The 49-year-old was found guilty by Luton Crown Court jurors in April last year of two charges of unfair trading, two charges of fraud and one of failing to comply with money laundering regulations after an investigation by the local authority. He was sentenced to three years behind bars.

The probe was launched after the council uncovered details of his involvement in a junk mail scam, which involved conning members of the public, usually the elderly or vulnerable, out of money through a number of bogus claims and promises.

And at a proceeds of crime hearing this month, Meniru was ordered to pay back £3m along with £200,000 in costs — £762,500 of which was received by the council.

The council has announced that £450,000 will fund the apprenticeships, with the remaining £312,500 going back into the council’s budget for fighting fraud.

Dave Hodgson, Bedford council’s directly-elected mayor, said: “We want to ensure that something positive can come out of this

appalling, callous crime.

“This funding will be put to good use and shared between two vital purposes — providing training and employment opportunities, and the prevention of, and enforcement against, such crimes in the future.”

A council spokesperson said it had not employed apprentices for “several years,” adding: “The council has put forward plans to allocate £450,000 to fund 15 apprenticeship places annually over the next three years.

“The places will be working within the council which will partner with Bedford College as its training provider.

“These apprenticeship places are available to all but will be especially promoted to groups which might particularly benefit from



the scheme such as ex-servicemen and looked after children.”

Ian Pryce, principal of Bedford College, said: “We are happy to be the council’s first choice for the training of its apprentices.

“We support young people into employment in a wide range of ways, including via apprenticeships for a wide range of organisations.”

Ill-gotten gains turned to doing good

Money confiscated from Hendrick Meniru is paying for apprenticeships at Bedford Borough Council in the following areas:

- Highways — six (tools/office)
- Grounds Maintenance — three (tools/office)
- Finance — one
- ICT — one
- HR — one
- Archives — one
- Electoral registration — one
- Adult Social Care — one

A council spokesperson said it would pay apprentices “above the minimum rate per hour for apprentices [£2.73 per hour] in order to attract the calibre and quality of candidate the council wishes to employ”. The rates are £6.50 an-hour as the main rate for workers aged 21 and over, £5.13 an-hour for 18 to 20-year-olds and £3.79 an-hour for workers under-18, but above the compulsory school age.

Commissioner at four colleges

The FE Commissioner has been back to work with four more college visits since June.

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) confirmed the visits meant Dr David Collins had taken his total number of inspections up to 14 since he was appointed to the troubleshooter post in November.

He was at Somerset’s Norton Radstock College in June after it had been rated inadequate by Ofsted.

Visits to Bournville College and Guildford College last month and West Cheshire College this month, were triggered by the Skills Funding Agency having rated their financial health as inadequate.

A spokesperson for BIS declined to comment on when Dr Collins would report on his latest four visits.


Guildford College said it was expecting its report this month. A Bournville College spokesperson said it appreciated Dr Collins’s “verbal feedback” during his visit.

West Cheshire College declined to comment. Norton Radstock College was unavailable for comment.

Meanwhile, Dr Collins will launch a structure and prospects appraisal of Weymouth College on Friday (September 26) that will run until the end of December, following his initial March inspection over finances.

The application process to find FE Commissioner advisers, to add to Dr Collins’ current team of five, ended in July and the recruitment process is ongoing, said the BIS spokesperson.

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Governors urged to be ‘braver and trust your instincts’ over classroom quality

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Governors should “be a bit braver” when challenging colleges on teaching and learning, according to former Department for Business, Innovation and Skills chief Dr Sue Pember.

The ex-head of FE and skills investment and performance at BIS, who is now a governance adviser at the Association of Colleges (AoC), said governors should trust their instincts when observing lessons.

Dr Pember, addressing governors and principals at a seminar organised by Westminster Briefing and the 157 Group on Wednesday (September 17), said: “You as individuals, you have all been through the school system. I would trust your instinct. If it’s boring to you and you’ve just been in 10 of them [lessons] that look really boring, trust your instincts and think, would you sign up to that course? Be a bit braver about this.”

She added: “Staff and student governors come into their own with you when they’re talking about the curriculum, because they’re the ones that can signpost you through — you know, level two, level three, BTec national, HNC — they know this, they are living and breathing it.

“They will know the curriculum changes that are coming through, and I still don’t think we use enough of staff and student governors around the governing body table to help explain.

“It’s normally the senior leaders who feel they have to talk about some of these things, but other people can talk about them as well. So how can you, as individuals, use your skills? Well, first of all, you should be assured that you’ve got systems that are assessing the teaching and learning in the college.”

With the focus of the conference ‘college governor leadership: involvement on learning teaching and assessment,’ Dr Pember also spoke about the need for governors to be assertive and not get too “cosy” with college leadership.

“Yes, you have to be assertive,” she said, “but not assertive with the finger out, but assertive in the form that you’re clear and you communicate and you ask good, challenging questions.

“There is a set of behaviours in the way a governing body acts. There shouldn’t be a clique where they go away, you know, the chair, the clerk and the principal, and then they come back and say, ‘We met last week in the pub and I’ve sorted it’. That really drives me crazy, and I hate when the principal says, ‘oh, we’ve just had a pre-meeting’.”

The seminar also heard from BIS deputy director for standards and qualifications Bobbie



Sue Pember addresses the seminar on college governor leadership. Inset: delegates at the seminar, organised by Westminster Briefing and the 157 Group

McClelland, who said governors needed to be well-informed about policy to do the job well, and could rely on regular updates from government.

She said: “High-performing governing bodies need to be clear on their roles, setting their direction and being outwardly accountable.

“To do that, you need to understand the wider policy context and government expectations, and we have done a number of things in this area which I hope you’ll see are helping you.

“The last couple of years, the minister has written out, on a termly basis, to governors, directly, about the important things that government is thinking about. And if you’re not getting those letters, you need to be asking your clerk where they are, because they are there for you.

“They are letters

which attach a whole set of briefing about latest government thinking on the important issues — and of course they featured very strongly most recently the English and maths story, the workforce measures that the government is actually putting in place to support the sector to actually improve the quality of teaching and learning in English and maths.

“I hope you are aware of those measures, because there’s more than £30m being thrown in over two years to actually enable you to recruit graduates, to enhance the skills of your existing staff — so there’s a lot going on in that front.”

Senior Ofsted inspector Julie Ashton also addressed the seminar, focusing on the importance of the role of governors in ensuring English and maths provision is of a high

enough quality.

Ms Ashton said: “When I was a newly-qualified teacher back in 1992, English and maths was important then. I have taught in schools, I have taught in sixth form colleges and general FE colleges, and it’s never gone away. So what really saddens me is that it’s 2014 and it’s still a priority and we still for whatever reason haven’t got it right.

“The responsibility for delivering English and maths is everybody’s responsibility, not just the English and maths specialists, it has to be much broader than that.

“To me it’s that accountability of the senior leadership team which matters most. Governors and senior leaders comparing perhaps success rates which perhaps include and exclude Functional Skills so you can spot the differences and then challenge them.”

Olivia



Patricia Tomlinson, governor at Hull College Group



Peter Eyre, governor at Sixth Form College Farnborough



From left: Ann Zinkin, governors’ board chair at Barnet and Southgate College, and Olivia Dorricott, director of leadership, governance and management at the Education and Training Foundation



Andy Gannon, director of policy, press relations and research at the 157 Group

Dorricott, director of leadership, governance and management at the Education and Training Foundation (ETF), spoke about the help and support the ETF offered governors, but also shared her personal experience as someone new to a governing board having recently started the role at Waltham Forest College.

She said: “I also am here I suppose in a personal capacity. I have just become a

governor, and so I am living a new induction.

“I am having some pretty significant and serious conversations with the senior leadership team about what they expect from me, and I was just saying, in my inductions with them, I have asked them what they expect from me as a governor, and that question, asked in five different places, has been very revealing.

“They want me to arrive at meetings having

read the papers, they want me to ask questions and they want me to be present, and aware of the college and in particular the students.

“My initial pushback was on technology. If as a working mother-of-two with two volunteer roles you want me to read the papers, then put them in a format I can find time to read, and that doesn’t mean a deck of papers, it means technology, technology, technology.”

Be open to different governors – and don’t outstay your welcome



Martin Ward, chair of the governors’ board at Leicester College
**Selected seminar quotes*

We have terms of office and it astonishes me that there are still governing bodies around that don’t.

But I do know one very successful chair of corporation who has been the chair since incorporation in 1993, and how on earth he’s managed to do it for all those years, I don’t know — but that isn’t healthy.

In that particular case it hasn’t done a lot of damage, but often that’s when things go horribly wrong, when people are in post for too long.

So what we have — and people like me quoting Marxism is a bit odd — is a sort of permanent revolution so that we’re constantly looking to refresh our governing body.

All the time we’re looking for succession planning and moving ourselves on. Of course we want the right skillset and the right expertise, but also we want people who’ve got a fresh view and fresh eyes.

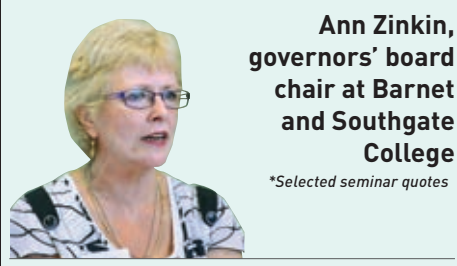
On the whole we’ve got the gender balance about right — it’s quite easy to find women, if you see what I mean — but Leicester is more than 50 per cent non-white, and less than 50 per cent of our governance is non-white.

We can’t keep up in that respect, so we haven’t quite got that one right. We’re not too bad, but we’re lagging behind on that one.

One thing we definitely haven’t got right, and I don’t know if anyone has, and that is the age one. There’s a lot of grey beards, because they’re the people who have been around long enough and are willing to do such things.

We’ve spent a lot of time thinking about evaluating ourselves as a governing body and the way we work, so we have an evaluation, all our committees and the governing body itself, evaluates its own work.

Understand your college’s key purpose, be ready to challenge and look for areas to improve



Ann Zinkin, governors’ board chair at Barnet and Southgate College
**Selected seminar quotes*

The single biggest element to ensuring effective lines of accountability is the need to establish a common and unswerving understanding of the core purpose. If

governors and management have a slightly different understanding, then crucial elements of scrutiny can be overlooked.

Agreeing and understanding this core process sets the standard for reporting lines. Can every governor on your every board articulate the core purpose? Take time to define and clarify accountability with the principal and with the executive.

Within our college, governors attend critical college processes such as self-assessment review panels. In our case, all governors attend one of these, and they share

it among themselves, and what it does is give us the ability to challenge managers on their strengths and look at areas for improvement.

Then, when we get an Ofsted inspector come through and ask us questions, it’s not just the data and the reports that we have had given to us by management, but actually we’ve got on the ground experience that we can share with Ofsted, and is a very personal insight. What on earth could be better than that?

What should governors be doing to challenge managers and staff, as critical

friends? Well, every governor has got to know the business, but never get in the business. We must always know the line of accountability, and not stray into matters of management. This way, we retain our independence.

Challenge, if outcomes of progress are not materialising at agreed review points. Don’t wait for the meetings — pick up the phone, email, talk to the managers.

Because if you meet and raise these issues, beforehand, it makes for a much more fruitful debate.



DAME ASHA KHEMKA

Principal of West Nottinghamshire College Group and chair of AoC India



BOB HARRISON

Member of the Further Education Learning Technology Action Group (Feltag) and the Education Technology Action Group, vice governors' chair Nothern College, board member of the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, and education adviser for Toshiba Information Systems

Taking Indian involvement ‘to the next level’

Dame Asha Khemka explains what was behind her recent visit to India, and why colleges should renew efforts to have a stake in its skills development.

It was an honour to be one of five college principals that joined Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg’s 40-strong trade delegation to India to explore opportunities presented by the new Indian government’s focus on economic growth.

To see the FE sector represented so strongly on the education and skills group that also included Dawn Ward OBE [Burton and South Derbyshire College], Stella Mbubaegbu CBE [Highbury College, Portsmouth], Norman Cave [Bournville College] and Paul Little [City of Glasgow College], along with the Association of Colleges’ international director John Mountford, confirmed the importance in which it is regarded by the government.

Moreover, I was delighted there was such a strong focus on skills during this first high-level visit to India since Prime Minister Narendra Modi was elected in May.

With Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg emphasising time and again the role UK FE colleges can play in supporting India’s ambitions to train 500 million people by 2022, I felt we had somebody truly championing the work we do, on the international stage.

Our meetings with ministers and senior Indian government officials, and discussions with business leaders during the three-day visit to New Delhi, Mumbai and Bangalore gave valuable opportunities to continue the work started on Prime Minister David Cameron’s delegation in 2013, of which I was also a part.

So, why is India such an important market?

As one of the world’s fastest-growing economies, a large portion of the global workforce is sitting in India. Indeed, many of its citizens come to work in the UK. Why not play a part in ensuring they’re even better-skilled when they arrive here?

That doesn’t mean prioritising Indians over our own students. But let’s be clear. Many of our industries already employ large numbers of Indians; therefore our country directly benefits from having a highly-skilled, well-trained workforce.

Similarly, many British companies now have a sizable presence in India. This is mirrored by our own FE sector — albeit on a much smaller scale — with several colleges already operating there.

Indeed, my own college is working with the Cordia Group of Educational Institutes to develop the vocational curriculum for its planned new construction college in Sanghol.

Meanwhile, our subsidiary company bksb’s recent expansion into India will help

thousands of citizens develop their English using its functional skills on-line learning solutions.

This demonstrates the opportunities that India’s growing skills agenda presents.

And in forming its first-ever Skills Ministry, the Indian government has stated its intentions very clearly.

Yet the UK faces huge competition from countries such the USA, Australia, Germany and Switzerland.

Why not play a part in ensuring Indian workers are even better-skilled when they arrive here? That doesn’t mean prioritising Indians over our own students

Individually, our colleges can only do so much. Yes, the consortium approach of AoC India has given us a credible voice and a seat at the table. It has also been successful in attracting £400,000 of funding through the UK-India Education and Research Initiative (UKIER) to enable member colleges to forge partnerships with Indian community colleges.

But now is the time to take things to the next level.

That is why I have written to Nick Clegg setting out a six-point plan to make a quick and visible impact in India.

My proposals include the formation of a Skills Task Force made up of ministers, government advisers, skills agencies, UK Trade and Investment, UK India Business Council and FE colleges to create a large-scale skills development project plan.

Initially working with a small number of large employers, we would consider their skills needs, develop a framework and, ultimately, train their workforce. By pooling our resources and talent, we can create and deliver a strong and successful skills landscape.

Re-creating the UK’s world-class education and skills system in India would reap rewards for both nations.

However, we need to move quickly if we are to be a part of this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

Keeping the Feltag momentum going

The new academic year brings new pressures and priorities — and learning technology must remain foremost among these, says Bob Harrison.

The last Becta (British Educational Communications and Technology Agency) research in 2010/11 suggested that only 30 per cent of FE providers were using technology effectively for teaching/learning/assessment and management.

The 2012 Association of Colleges (AoC) survey suggested this figure was still accurate two years later despite millions of pounds being spent by the last year of Becta and two years of the Learning and Skills Improvement Service.

In fact, the AoC study concluded that government policy aims for FE and skills were in danger of being undeliverable because of the lack of technological capability and capacity.

Then we had former Skills Minister Matthew Hancock and the Further Education Learning Technology Action Group (Feltag) and its 35-plus recommendations.

They covered leadership/vision, infrastructure, regulation, workforce development, learner engagement and employer relationships.

There is a critical role for the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills in ensuring coherence and maintaining momentum

It is encouraging that the use of technology to improve learning in FE and skills is likely to be on every governing body agenda and the Feltag ‘nudges’ are already having an impact.

Virtual learning, blended learning and online learning are now part of the vocabulary of FE providers.

But there is a critical role for the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) in ensuring coherence and maintaining momentum. There are many sceptics who falsely believe Feltag was a ‘flash in the pan’ from Mr Hancock.

They are sadly mistaken and if that view prevails, the future of FE is in danger. The challenges outlined in the Feltag report are

common across all sectors. That is why the Education Technology Action Group (Etag) was established.

Of all the challenges, leadership/vision and workforce skills are the biggest and the efforts of a plethora of agencies, quangos, charities, trusts and the private sector need to be coordinated and coherent to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of public resources.

There is also an enormous opportunity for an increase in effectiveness to create more and better learning opportunities for more learners who have improved access, more engagement, enhanced learning and tutor support, more relevant assessment and feedback and improved progression and employment opportunities.

But how will we know? Who will monitor progress? What data do we have and will we need?

That is the BIS challenge. Who will pull all this together? What data will we need to monitor progress? How will we bring some coherence to the potential free for all and overlap and duplication?

If Jisc is funding a major development, how will the Education and Training Foundation know? If Ufi trust is funding a multi-million pound online/blended CPD programme for FE teachers to improve their use of technology for learning who else will know? Will all of these initiatives feed into the leadership and governance programmes of AoC?

Changes in digital technology, provision in schools and changes to the computing national curriculum, and most importantly the digital expectations of learners and employers mean the current funding and predominantly face to face deliver paradigm is simply unsustainable.

The FE system needs to realign its assets from a system designed to meet the needs of the first industrial revolution to one which meets the needs of the second revolution in an increasingly digital and global world.

The successful FE providers of the future will embrace the spirit of Feltag and not be sidetracked by 10 per cent or 50 per cent or wait for BIS to issue more clarification on how to implement Feltag as it will be a long wait.

FE providers should grasp the opportunity to sell off some of their empty glass palaces and invest in more teachers, learning design and a technological infrastructure that will allow them to engage, motivate, inspire, support, teach, assess and progress learners.

The FE providers who do not grasp this opportunity are in danger of becoming museum pieces of our industrial heritage.

After spending most of my life working in FE and adult education I am not prepared to let that happen.

The number of young women considered not in education, employment or training (Neet) is 29 per cent higher than it is for young men. Dr Carole Easton considers why this is the case and what it means for the skills agenda.

Young women want to work, but hundreds of thousands are stuck not earning or learning.

Our Scarred for Life? inquiry into females who are not in education, employment or training (Neet) recently presented its initial findings in the Totally Wasted? The Crisis of Young Women’s Worklessness report.

We highlighted the fact that there are 418,000 women aged 18 to 24 compared with 325,000 men.

The number of female Neets has barely changed in a decade and on average they will also be Neet for longer — three years rather than two.

As well as the key point that young women want to work, our initial findings — based on focus groups, surveys and face to face conversations — show that the advice, training and support available to young women not leading to any employment or leading to jobs that are too few in number and too poorly paid to be sustainable.

We have discovered a lot about what young women need, but have also heard from training and FE providers about the challenges they face, including financial constraints. But we need to gather more evidence before making detailed recommendations next year.



DR CAROLE EASTON

Chief executive, Young Women’s Trust

Making young women part of the skills ‘equation’

The right support is vitally important because in many cases young women are being sent down a path that quickly becomes difficult to escape from. They need the right advice in the first place but also the opportunity to change direction if they realise they have made the wrong decision. That’s what is lacking at the moment and that’s why they are stuck.

Many young women are directed towards traditionally female sectors even though their interests and aptitude lie elsewhere.

We commissioned a ComRes poll of 859 Neets which showed that female Neets were three times more likely than male Neets to have been told by careers advisers to think about becoming care workers, nannies, nurses or hairdressers and male Neets are at least six times more likely to be told to think about becoming IT technicians, construction workers or electricians and plumbers.

When I was 18 I decided to study IT. Finding myself in a slightly alien world

Young women should be part of the equation when it comes to considering skills shortages in their area

dominated by men, I decided to move on. That was, I’ll admit, a long time ago, but even now the world of IT is still male-dominated and that’s not about to change — for every one woman doing an apprenticeship in IT there are ten men.

Reflecting that early careers advice, young women are training for jobs traditionally

associated with women. The apprenticeship figures show that five sectors account for 61 per cent of all female apprenticeships, while the same proportion of men work in more than ten sectors.

It is little wonder that so many women end up Neet when they are competing for jobs that simply don’t exist.

A young woman I met in Blackburn had qualified as a hairdresser and become “self-employed” as none of the salons she approached would use her services otherwise. She struggled for months to make enough money to live on and eventually gave up.

She is not alone. On average, there are five qualified hairdressers for every job in hairdressing. But young women heading down this career path aren’t told how hard it will be for them to make a living in their local area.

The same goes for childcare. So many of the young women I have met around the country have been encouraged to study childcare without being warned, for example, that in areas of deprivation and high unemployment few can afford childcare so there will be no demand for their services.

Locally, young women should be part of the equation when it comes to considering skills shortages in their area. Nationally, it is time to recognise that it doesn’t make economic sense to deny women who want to work the opportunity to do so.

Visit www.youngwomenstrust.org for more information on the study and to take part

FE Week & Me

PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

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INFO

Our annual *FE Week* and Me photography competition is back and once again FE Week has teamed up with NCFE and the Royal Photographic Society to hunt for stunning pictures that depict student life in the FE and skills, through the eyes of students.

TWO CATEGORIES

This year there are two levels of entry: photography student and non-photography student. Entrants will be in with a chance of winning some stunning prizes and the chance to shadow a high-profile professional photographer.

The competition is open to anyone studying within the FE and skills sector.

Our readers will vote for the winner, which will be announced in November.

To enter simply email your entry by the October 20, along with with your name, college or independent learning provider, course details and whether you are entering as a photography or non-photography student.

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PROFILE



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Marketing a brick is no easy task. “It’s not one of those things where there’s more than meets the eye — it’s a brick. You quickly run out of superlatives for the latest brick,” says Stephen Wright, who landed an early 1980s job in marketing with a brick and tarmac company fresh from a business degree from Coventry Polytechnic.

It’s a far cry from the world of qualifications, where Wright has headed up the Federation of Awarding Bodies (FAB) since last month.

“The sector is very variable, and awarding bodies are not homogenous — some are large, some are small, some have got very large international business,” he says.

And such variety does not, for the dad-of-three, equate to an overpopulated sector.

Indeed, he takes issue with the idea that there might be too many qualifications, as concluded by the Nigel Whitehead review for the UK Commission for Employment and Skills, which successfully called for public funding of many adult



Wright (right) playing football with younger brother John in 1970

qualifications to be cut.

“I can understand the perception,” says 50-year-old Wright, but adding: “It doesn’t make sense to me because I’ve never worked for an awarding body which makes qualifications for fun just to annoy people like Whitehead.”

For new Skills Minister Nick Boles surveying all of the qualifications on offer, he admits, “it does look confusing.”

“But actually if you look at it from a niche position, as a business in a particular industry then you might know the three qualifications related to your sector,” says Wright.

“There are thousands upon thousands of different employment sectors so it’s no surprise that there are thousands of different employment qualifications all at different levels, and even though some of them have small numbers of entries, they are exactly right for a particular need.”

But he acknowledges there is still a lot of work to do to illuminate the sprawling world of qualifications.

“We did a survey in the late 1990s about what

“I’ve never worked for an awarding body which makes qualifications for fun just to annoy people like Whitehead”

qualification employers recognised most, and it was the O-level,” he says.

“But O-levels had finished in 1988 — it just shows that within the sector a lot goes on, but out there it’s such a small part of what people generally do you have to work very hard explain it.”

And it is the subject of the O-level replacement GCSE, and also A-levels, with regards annual headlines proclaiming exams are getting easier, that gets Wright hot under the collar.

“No, exams are not getting easier,” he says. “There’s not really any great incentive for people to make exams easier. I guess there may be the temptation to go for one kind of qualification rather than another, but the vast majority of qualifications are well-designed, valid assessments of people’s skills.”

His three sons, George, aged 22, Henry, 20, and Oliver, 18, he says “work 100 times harder than we ever did and their expectations are so much higher”.

Wright’s first insight into vocational education came in 1993, when he began marketing the Devon and Kent trainee enterprise councils (Tecs).

Since then he has worked for awarding bodies small and large, from City & Guilds and Edexcel to ITEC and the Institute of Sales and Marketing Management.

And now as FAB chief executive, he says he’s only just realising how valuable the organisation’s work is for members — despite being a member since its inception in the early 2000s.

“The first thing that hit me was just the sheer range of subjects it gets involved in,” he says.



Wright, aged one, with grandfather Ernie, a train driver

“When [former chief executive] Jill Lanning handed over, I totted up just how many groups she was attending and it was 47 different committees and groups, which is quite astonishing.

“And that level of representation I just wasn’t aware of.

“I was aware of the weekly newsletter and as a small awarding body I thought was fantastic, it meant I didn’t have to go to 47 different committees to keep abreast of the main things that are going on — so my first job is to keep that going.”

Wright, one of three children, was born

and raised in Southport where his parents — television rental company manager Ian and school dinner lady Joan — were “the very standard lovely mum and dad who looked after us, and encouraged us and supported us”.

School on the other hand, was less supportive.

“I didn’t really enjoy it, but didn’t hate it either,” he says.

“The school’s expectations

were pretty low and I accepted that very willingly — I did the minimum to be pretty good, without being anything special.

“Everyone has the odd inspiring teacher and there were certainly some of those, but generally an air of low expectations has an impact on everybody at the school.”

Wright now lives in Kent with wife Jane, a landscape artist, and Oliver, who is set to follow his brothers to university.

But despite his expertise in qualifications, Wright still experiences the same difficulties of any parent watching their offspring go through exams.

“I’m here to really do something with this rather than just keep chugging along”

“My kids don’t believe I know anything about qualifications,” he says.

“I say to them ‘Find out what the specification is, because that’s what you’ll be assessed on’ and they say ‘You don’t know anything about it, Dad’.

“They don’t listen to me, and then you notice that they sort of have later on.

“So I’ve said priority one is do something you’re interested in, you get the best results out of it.”

It seems he’s following his own advice

in his new role.

“Awarding is a fantastic sector to be in, it has such an impact on people’s lives and on the economy, the success of the country, by increasing skills, increasing people’s confidence,” says Wright.

“I’m still getting into the job. I’m just looking around, but I’m enjoying the fact that my day job is something I really want to do, and I’m here to really do something with this rather than just keeping it chugging along.”

And one of his priorities for FAB, he says, is “not only work with awarding bodies to get them to understand employers, but also to work with employers to get them to understand awarding bodies and what that can bring to their learning and development strategy”.

He also says part of his focus will be on how FAB can “support, help and encourage awarding bodies to get into the international market”.

“I went out to South Africa with City & Guilds and it’s quite enlightening — when you’re in the UK and people are umming and ahing over vocational qualifications and the value of them and then you go out to South Africa and they’re so valued and they’re considered so important and they’re held on such a pedestal. Yes, internationally, British qualifications have got a very high reputation.”

It’s a personal thing

What is your favourite book?
I quite like dystopian novels, like 1984 and Brave New World

What is your pet hate?
I don’t like being late, it doesn’t mean I’m not late, but I beat myself up about it

What do you do to switch off after work?
When I watch football, I can switch off everything. I used to play football with some friends but you get a bit old for it so me and a few friends have been trying a new sport every month — we’ve done canoeing, bowling curling, climbing, volleyball, sumo wrestling, tennis.

It’s just trying to find something to fill the void that football left

If you could invite anyone, living or dead, to a dinner party who would it be?
It would have to be somebody who little is known about like Shakespeare.

Also I met Charlie Duke who walked on the moon and he had amazing stories — an amazing man, and someone I’d want to meet again

What did you want to be when you were growing up?
A footballer [Wright is a Southport Football Club supporter]. I still do. A top footballer that everyone recognises is the best in that position.

Also an archaeologist. I have no idea why



Wright with sons, from left, Oliver, George and Henry in 2004



Wright, aged one, with grandfather Ernie



Wright (centre) with, from left, brother John and friend Nick Fahey-Wilson at watching England vs France in Euro 2004

CAMPUS ROUND-UP

Out of this world success for space engineering graduates



From left: Loughborough College space engineering advanced A-level graduates Nigel Grainger and Jessica Bains, both aged 18, at the National Space Centre

A graduate from the UK’s first post-16 space engineering advanced A-level programme at Loughborough College has secured an out-of-this-world apprenticeship with leading aerospace company Airbus.

The two-year course was launched in September 2012 and the first wave of 11 graduates completed in June.

It combined A-level maths and physics with BTec engineering and weekly visits to the National Space Centre, in Leicester, where they met NASA astronaut Colonel Chris Hadfield in January.

Graduate Nigel Grainger has now secured an undergraduate apprenticeship with aerospace firm Airbus.

He said: “I’ll be working with a company

involved in the UK’s first ever space port. It doesn’t get much more exciting.”

Another graduate Jessica Bains secured a scholarship with the University of South Florida for a physics with maths and engineering master’s degree.



From left: Loughborough College space engineering advanced A-level graduate Rebecca Healey, aged 17, NASA astronaut Colonel Chris Hadfield and fellow graduate Connor Mugglestone, 18

Spurs stars pass on football advice



Tottenham Hotspur players took part in a question-and-answer session with football hopefuls from Barnet and Southgate College.

“It’s great knowing that one day I could be one of them.”

Youth team defensive midfielder Anton Walkes and first team central defender Eric Dier met students on level two and three BTec and NVQ courses run through the education and football development programme that the college runs with the Premier League club.

They explained how they prepared for big matches and reflected on their careers so far, before taking part in a training session with learners.

Level three BTec diploma in sport student Nabil Hasheem, aged 18, said: “I had a great

time learning new football skills with the Spurs players.

Above: Barnet and Southgate College students Nabeel Hashim, aged 18, Amy Sinden, 17, Tottenham Hotspur defender Eric Dier and students Shakira Waithe, 19, and Mardochee Mboliko, 17



From left: Tottenham youth team player Anton Walkes with Barnet and Southgate College principal David Byrne accepting a plaque from Mr Dier and Tottenham Hotspur Foundation chief executive officer Grant Cornwell

& MOVERS & SHAKERS

Your weekly guide to who’s new and who’s leaving

Westminster Kingsway College has appointed business and regeneration expert Ruth Duston as its new governors’ chair.

She takes up post next month with the retirement of six-year chair David Kogan, who is principal of the Wasserman Media Group based in London’s Global Media Rights division.

Ms Duston is currently chief executive of a number of business partnerships and heads up more Business Improvement Districts than anyone else in the UK, including the Victoria BID, The Northbank and the soon-to-be-created BID in the City of London.

Through her roles she works extensively with academic and vocational institutions, and is an advocate of the role that business can play in ensuring young people secure sustainable future job opportunities.

She said: “I am looking forward to joining the excellent team at Westminster Kingsway College and helping them achieve their ambitious goals for the

future. My experiences in running multiple organisations, bringing both the private and public sectors together, and delivering large scale programmes of change will, I’m sure, add value and I am keen to get to work.”

Mr Kogan’s retirement plans were announced by the college around eight months ago.

Andy Wilson, principal, said: “Westminster Kingsway is enormously grateful to Mr Kogan for the six years of leadership he has provided to bring stability to the college.”

Meanwhile, Marcus Kingwell has been unveiled managing director of the newly-formed AoC (Association of Colleges) Sport.

He joins the organisation from London Sport, where he led the creation of a new, city-wide organisation for community sports development. He brings more than 15 years of senior experience in sport, leisure, health and wellbeing.

Mr Kingwell said: “I feel privileged to be taking on the role of AoC Sport managing director at such an exciting time for college



sport. There is great potential to increase participation, investment and awareness of sport in the sector, and make a real impact on students’ lives.”

Joining Mr Kingwell in leading college sport is Clare Howard, as deputy managing director. She was previously head of sport policy at the AoC.

Richard Atkins, chair of AoC Sport and president of the AoC, said: “Our vision is that every college student is encouraged, supported and has the opportunity to participate in sport and physical activity as an integrated part of their college experience, contributing to learning, progression to employment and the development of active and sporting habits for life.”



If you want to let us know of any new faces at the top of your college, training provider or awarding organisation please let us know by emailing news@feweek.co.uk

Pensioner recognised for 25 years of constant study at college

Bosses at Bracknell and Wokingham College have waived a £129 course fee for grandmother-of-four Gen Van den Heuvel as she marks 25 years of study, writes Paul Offord.

Gen Van den Heuvel felt she might reconnect with the country of her birth when signed up for a French literature course at Bracknell and Wokingham College a quarter of a century ago.

Born and raised in Paris, she experienced the Nazi occupation before moving to Britain in 1945.

And the studies proved more than a brief comfort, with Gen, now aged 82, going on to take courses in Russian history, pattern making for dresses, sugarcraft — even Christmas cracker making.

She puts the cost of all her studies over the years at around £2,500, plus £250 for books, but her impressive adult learning effort — and loyalty to the college — have been rewarded with 15 weeks’ free (worth £129) as she prepares to embark on another French literature course.

Gen told : “I still see friends I made there 25 years ago and plan to keep going to college for as long as I can get to classes.”



From left: Course tutor Marie-Chantal Brault, principal Campbell Christie CBE, long-serving student Gen van den Heuvel and languages co-ordinator Karen Miller

She added: “I used to get an old age pensioner discount for the courses, but that stopped [five years ago] so the free lessons are much appreciated.”

Gen’s tutor, Marie-Chantal Brault, said: “I think it’s amazing, but then Gen is an amazing person who offers a great deal to the class. People in the class come from different generations and backgrounds and it gives them an opportunity to bring their personalities and opinions out when we are discussing the books.

“We also use other forms of learning to support the books we read including the internet, film and the theatre and we have

mental stimulation.”

She added: “I studied quite a variety of courses during my first 15 years there, but always stuck with French literature and just concentrate on that now.

“I didn’t want to have to sit any exams, so all the courses I chose did not lead to qualifications.

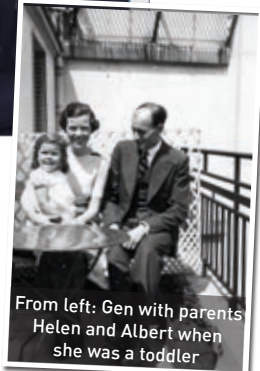
“That wasn’t the idea for me. I went along for social reasons and to keep my mind active, which attending college really allowed me to do.”

Principal Campbell Christie said: “It’s really rewarding to meet an adult student who has gained so much from their college experience.”

Gen’s latest class will be studying a book set in the First World War, called Un Long Dimanche De Fiançailles by Sebastien Japrisot.

Classic books previously studied by Gen included La Suite Francaise by Irene Nemirovsky, Le Perre Goriot by Honoré de Balzac, La Bete Humain by Emile Zola, and Les Miserables by Victor Hugo,

which inspired a class trip to watch the West End musical.



From left: Gen with parents Helen and Albert when she was a toddler

DO YOU WANT TO BE IN CAMPUS ROUND-UP?

Send your stories with pictures to campus@feweek.co.uk including names, ages and course details of students where applicable

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Vice Principal – Delivery

Salary c. £80,000

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City College Plymouth serves over 17,000 students with a comprehensive portfolio of academic and vocational courses and excellent services for business. We are positioned at the heart of our community, and make a major contribution to the region's partnership strategies for growth and prosperity.

The historic and thriving coastal City of Plymouth is surrounded by beautiful beaches and stunning moorland – a career with us could be just the breath of fresh air you need!

This is a key strategic role, with responsibility for College-wide curriculum development and delivery, and further enhancing the quality of our teaching and learning. The successful candidate will bring strong leadership skills and significant experience of the further education sector, combined with a passion for education and student success.

To apply, please visit the College e-recruitment site at www.cityplym.ac.uk/jobs.

For a confidential and informal discussion about the post, please contact the Principal and CEO, Phil Davies, on 01752 305707.

Closing date: Wednesday 8 October

Interview dates: 20 and 21 October

www.cityplym.ac.uk/jobs

If you have any questions about applying please contact Human Resources on 01752 305322 or e-mail recruitment@cityplym.ac.uk

City College Plymouth is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. • The College is an equal opportunities employer



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Standards and Qualifications

Based in London or Doncaster

£30,000-£35,000

SkillsActive needs to achieve and consolidate a high profile position in the active leisure and learning sector as the employer-led Sector Skills Council for sport and recreation, health and fitness, play work, the outdoors, caravan, hair and beauty industries.

This post will be to manage specific areas of SkillsActives work in relation to qualification development and Awarding Organisation support within all seven sectors and will directly support the work of the Director of Standards and Qualifications.

To view the full JD and to submit your application please visit: www.skillsactive.com/jobs

Head of Marketing required at Lewisham Southwark College

Salary: £47,975 p.a. + benefits including 30 days' annual leave, Local Government Pension and medical insurance.



We are looking for an experienced and highly motivated marketing professional to move our marketing strategy into action.

The College has campuses in the boroughs of Lewisham and Southwark and attracts students from across London. Our brand new Waterloo campus will present a great opportunity to promote the College. As Head of Marketing you will need to be visible, consultative and have a presence on all campuses. You will also support the College's employer engagement activities and relationships with valued partners.

Apply online now by visiting www.lesoco.ac.uk/staff/working-for-us
Closing date: Sunday 28 September 2014



Training Adviser – IT – 2 posts

(IT Practitioner and IT User Levels 2 – 3)

Newcastle - Full Time - Permanent - £21 - £23k

We require experienced and qualified training advisers to deliver either IT Practitioner or IT User at levels 2 and 3. The successful applicant will undertake a varied and demanding role in the preparation & delivery of work based learning.

For full details please see www.necc.co.uk
Appointment will be subject to satisfactory references and DBS clearance

NECC is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare and safety of young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff to share this commitment. Further details are available from our HR Department Email: HR@necc.co.uk or by contacting the HR Department on 0300 303 6322

NECC – Supporting diversity, managing equality



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Competitive and flexible package

FE Associates is recognised as a highly successful major supplier of interim management and consultancy support for curriculum, finance, MIS, IT and funding in the post-16 sector.

We are inviting applications from experienced practitioners who are currently working at Vice Principal or Finance Director level to join our team of associates. We would also welcome applications from those at Financial Manager / Controller level to join our team on a full time, fractional or associate basis.

CURRICULUM ASSOCIATES

We are looking to strengthen our team of self-employed associate consultants in all subject areas and are inviting applications from suitably qualified professionals with recent college experience at Head of Department level or above.

You will have a strong track record in your field, be motivated, flexible and conversant with the issues facing the FE sector.

For both posts applicants must be prepared to travel around the UK and stay away from home when required.

To apply, please email your CV with cover letter to recruitment@feassociates.com by Friday 26th September 2014.



www.feassociates.com

We are looking for a:

SALES ADMINISTRATOR - IMMEDIATE START

SALARY: £20K TO £22.5K (DOE)

Greenwich, London

Responsible for the day-to-day administration of the Lsect sales team office.

Roles will include: supporting the sales manager and executives with the processing of sales, general office administration, financial administration and maintaining high levels of customer service.

Closing date: 5pm, Friday, September 26

To apply email: hannah.smith@lsect.com

For more information visit jobs.feweek.co.uk

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ACADEMIES



14-19 SENIOR EDUCATION CATEGORY MANAGER

£48,056-£58,118

We have an exciting opportunity for a creative, results-orientated professional to join our team to lead and manage all aspects of our 14-19 offer and take ownership for the launch of our brand new 14 -19 TechBac offer.

This role will focus on developing and growing our 14-19 customer base, increasing brand reach and recognition, and developing new services as part of a wider proposition. This position provides a fantastic opportunity for a dynamic, organised, and experienced educational and training professional to grow and work closely with our product and sales and marketing teams.

CUSTOMER PLANNING MANAGER - AWARDING & ASSESSMENT SERVICES

CUSTOMER PLANNING MANAGER - LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES AND CONTENT

£ 45,845 - £ 56,033

We are looking for two dynamic and commercial professionals to drive the yearly planning for our UK awarding services and learning technologies. Working across product and marketing you will oversee the development of our overall customer proposition and work with the commercial teams to activate, whilst coordinating the overall go-to-market planning for the release of key products and services aligned to customer needs and buying cycle.

You will have a solid understanding of the vocational education market and you will be able to inspire, lead and motivate teams around you to deliver the annual plan that you develop. A background in business development or project management could be advantageous.

CUSTOMER MARKETING MANAGER

£42,201 - £51,579

We need someone with exceptional skills in content creation and creative execution. You'll work closely with our Senior Sales team to shape the annual Customer Marketing Plan – designing the initiatives that help to win the big proposals, tenders and pitches.

The role will focus on building deep customer insights by supporting sales visits and using this to understand the drivers of buyer preferences that will help you and the wider marketing teams to use in campaign plans and activity. You will work closely with our Senior Sales team to shape the annual Customer Marketing Plan that delivers on high value opportunities within key targeted customers, designing the process and personally supporting initiatives.

You will also own and oversee the development and maintenance of engaging tools, a compelling credentials bank (including testimonials and case studies of value delivery) for wider use by marketing and sales.

This role is suited for an individual who is commercially astute with exceptional skills in communication, storytelling, content creation and creative execution. Previous experience in B2B consultative/solution sell or an Agency background is strongly desirable.

All roles are based in central London at our new offices in Farringdon

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Chief Finance Officer

c.£80k + benefits



كليات التميز
Colleges of excellence

Hertfordshire London Colleges are delighted to be associated with the Colleges of Excellence's ambitious and exciting plans to deliver world class technical and vocational training (TVET) across the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. We have been awarded an exclusive contract to establish three new colleges in the central locations of Unaizah and Al Zulfi. The colleges opened their doors in August 2014 and training has now begun to support our new learners to succeed in their chosen vocational pathways.

We are now seeking to appoint a Chief Finance Officer to provide outstanding strategic leadership and management of all financial services for the three colleges. The successful candidate will demonstrate significant experience of being able to prepare and manage annual financial forecasts, devise and monitor financial control systems and manage the services of external suppliers. This new role will provide several challenges but even greater opportunities for the successful candidate.

As part of the benefits package, our new Saudi-based CFO will be entitled to live in our carefully designed, luxurious Western-style accommodation block in Buraidah, the thriving capital of Qassim province, located three hour's drive north of Riyadh. They will also be entitled to a flight allowance, free private healthcare and an end of contract bonus.

If you are interested in this exciting opportunity and want to play a key part of one of the largest educational developments in the world today, we would love to hear from you.



We are working with **Protocol** on this important appointment. Please contact **Protocol's** dedicated Senior Executive Recruitment Team to request an application pack at execrecruitment@protocol.co.uk, or visit to www.protocol.co.uk/HLC for further information about this exciting opportunity.

Protocol

Excellence in FE

The closing date for applications is 12pm on Monday 20th October 2014. Interviews will be held on Thursday 6th November 2014.

We believe we can't deliver consistently excellent outcomes for the students we serve, if we're not more than just a little bit dissatisfied with the status quo.

It's this hunger to do better that's driving transformative change and improvement at New College Stamford – and the good news for your career is that we're hungrier than ever. We want to do more; and these three posts, led by our recently appointed Principal, will form the heart of a leadership team which engages with all our students in a complex operating environment, embracing challenges and shaping the College's future.

Vice Principal Finance, Planning & Resources £70k

We're looking for an outstanding professional whose knowledge of complex funding streams is complemented by the highest level of general financial expertise. You'll lead the business planning process, working closely and effectively with colleagues to make meaningful connections between budgets and resources, and further develop our 'student first' ethos. You'll also oversee Estates and Facilities, IT, HR and Capital Development, develop robust business management systems, and embed a strategic understanding of finance across the College.

Vice Principal Curriculum Strategy & Learning Improvement £70k

At its simplest, our curriculum is our product and our students our lifeblood. We want to make sure that we remain the first choice across the board, serving school leavers, apprentices and employers – anyone embarking on further and higher studies. You'll bring broad and deep knowledge of curriculum development and improvement at a strategic level, as well as

the professional curiosity to keep us at the leading edge of innovation and the creativity to try new ways of working. Your track record must show that you've successfully kept the student experience firmly at the heart of your achievements, and we'd especially like to hear from candidates who are currently serving (or have recently served) as an 'additional inspector' for Ofsted.



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Attractive Salary

This is a rare opportunity to create and shape a role which catalyses potential relationships, strengthens existing ones and extracts maximum value from our established role within the regional and sub-regional business community. We know that we're respected and acknowledged as a provider of choice, but there is much more we can and need to do to consolidate and extend this position. You'll be a crucial part of making that process work, connecting ideas, brokering partnerships and proposing new models: it's an unusually free rein which will appeal to your entrepreneurial and commercially-motivated professional profile. Experience/ knowledge of apprenticeships and adult learning is essential, but beyond that we're happy to be persuaded...

Access our briefing pack at www.davidsonpartners.com/ncs1031 For a subsequent informal conversation, contact **Shahidul Miah** on 07581 230171, **Leon Ward** on 07871 044649 or **Hamish Davidson** on 07932 698807.


Closing date: 10 October 2014.

Recognising the potential of a diverse community New College Stamford is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Successful candidates will be required to complete an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) application. New College Stamford is a 'Specified Place'.



New College Stamford

All round excellence



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Young Epilepsy is the leading national charity working exclusively to improve the lives of children, teenagers and young people with epilepsy and related neurological conditions. With over 100 years of experience, our unique headquarters offers world-class services which include the provision of Residential Services, Education and Health Care to children and young people in the UK.

We also provide diagnostic, assessment and rehabilitation services to children and young people and work closely with distinguished organisations like Great Ormond Street Hospital and University College London.

St Piers College is a residential and day Independent Specialist Provider with a current cohort of 120 learners aged between 19-25 with a range of complex learning disabilities and difficulties.

Lecturer

From **£23,344 per annum**

42 hours per week, permanent

Based in Lingfield, Surrey

We currently have teaching vacancies and are looking for experienced and qualified lecturers, with a background of working with post-16 learners with special educational needs, who can contribute in an enthusiastic, flexible and innovative way to extend the college and its excellent provision.

You will be required to consistently deliver high quality teaching, develop skills-based learning and to act as a Personal Tutor as part of a multi-disciplinary staff team. There will also be a requirement to undertake line management responsibilities for learning support staff.

We invite applicants with expertise in one or more of the following:


- A vocational specialism such as; Land-based Studies, Multi-skills, ICT, Functional Skills.
- Autistic Spectrum Disorder and associated challenging behaviour.
- Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities (Sensory Level).

For further details of this and other vacancies, our benefits package, or to download an application pack, please visit our website youngepilepsy.org.uk Alternatively, you can email recruitment@youngepilepsy.org.uk or telephone 01342 831234. When applying, please complete your supporting information detailing why you think you would be suitable for the role.


Closing date: 10 October 2014.

We welcome applications from all sections of the community and guarantee to interview all applicants with a disability who meet the minimum criteria. We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. An enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check (formerly CRB) will be required.


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INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

Learning Technology Manager

Salary: £36,099 per annum
(Permanent / Full-time - 37 hours per week)



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This exciting new role is based within the Quality Department supporting the teaching and learning staff, providing a crucial link with the IT Department and taking the lead on the continued cross college development of e-learning, virtual learning environments, learning technologies and their embedding within teaching and learning across both of the college campuses. You will also take the lead on implementing the requirements resulting from the Further Education Learning Technology Action Group (FELTAG).






An experienced trainer you should also have experience of and be able to demonstrate that you have a strong commitment to striving for excellence in the development of learning technologies in an educational setting. You should also be an excellent communicator who thrives in a demanding, fast moving environment and is driven by the desire to help people to succeed.


This is a varied role requiring someone with effective presentation skills and attention to detail. You should have a proactive approach to cross college working as well as the confidence to use your initiative whilst working on your own and as part of the team.

Call: **01964 504190**
Email: great.jobs@bishopburton.ac.uk
or visit www.bishopburton.ac.uk
for further information
NO AGENCIES

Closing Date: 6th October 2014
Interview Date: Week commencing 20th October 2014

The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff to share this commitment. An enhanced DBS check will be carried out on the successful candidate. Bishop Burton College is committed to Equal Opportunities for all.





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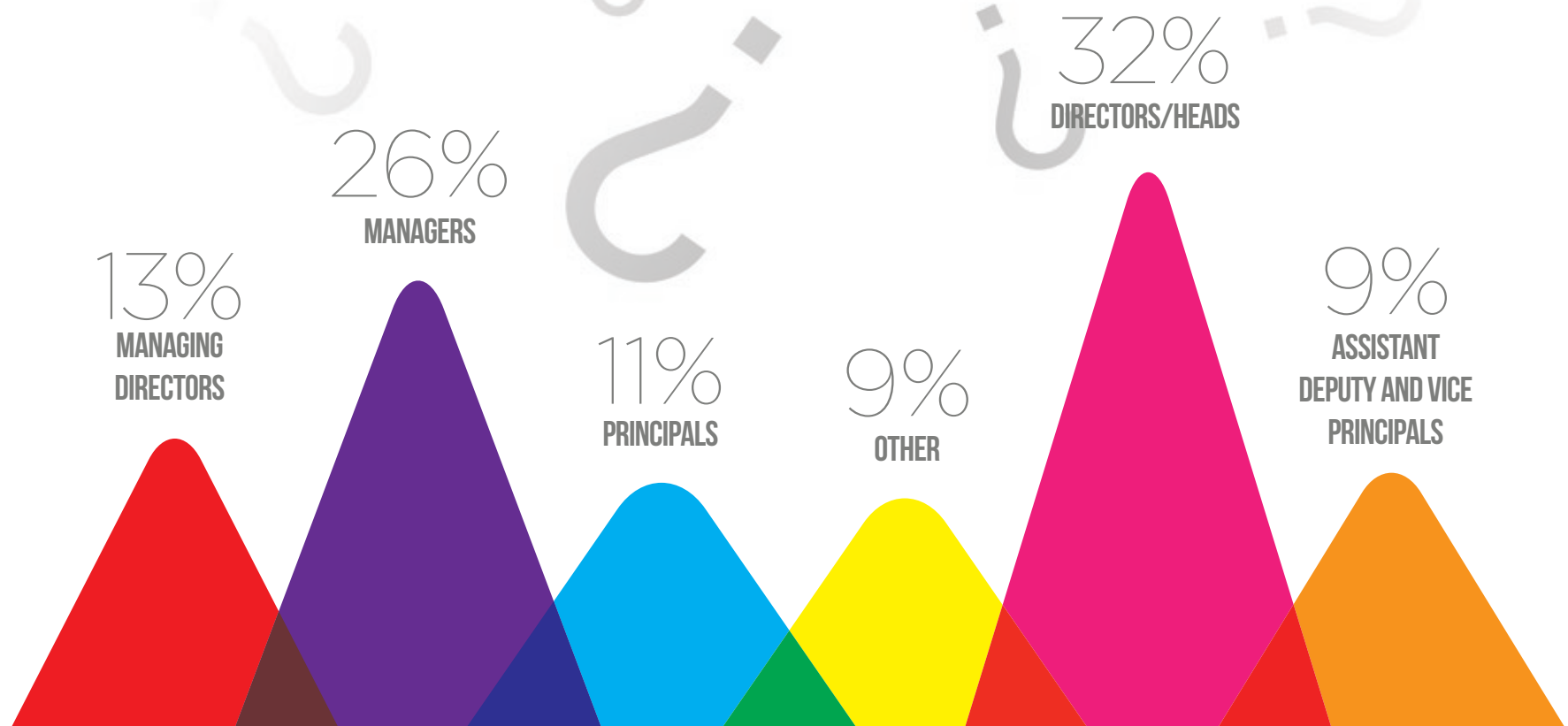
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Sunderland College

TRAINER/ASSESSOR (English and Maths) x2 posts

Post Ref: 5703, 37 hours per week.
Full-time, Permanent.
£25,884 - £28,287 per annum

Sunderland College has a long history of employer engagement, achieved through developing the skills and knowledge that equip our learners to work in a diverse range of sectors. Today, Sunderland College works with over 400 businesses and is one of the largest providers of Apprenticeships in the region. The College is keen to continue to build on this success and expand its workforce having secured a number of significant contracts in the above areas.

We are seeking to appoint two suitably qualified Trainer/Assessors to work within the department of English and Maths. The majority of work will involve workplace delivery of Maths and English qualifications including our Apprenticeship provision.

The successful applicant will hold a Subject Specialism in Maths and/or English and a teaching qualification/assessors qualification would be preferable.

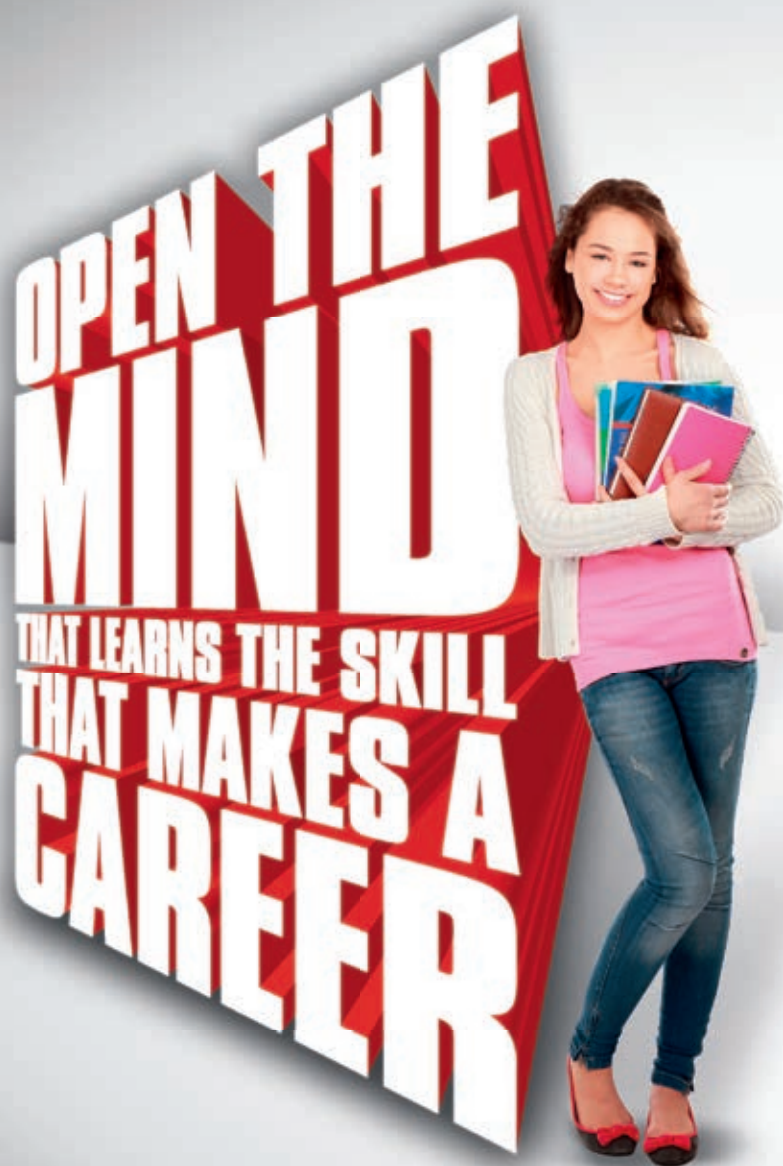
Applicants should be able to demonstrate their previous relevant experience in their personal statement and practical examples of how they fulfil the person specification.

Due to the nature of this post you will need to independently mobile and be able to travel throughout the North East and in some instances further afield. You will be required to undertake an Enhanced Disclosure Check.

To find out more about this great opportunity visit sunderlandcollege.ac.uk/vacancies alternatively email vacancies@sunderlandcollege.ac.uk or call 0191 511 6046 to request an application pack.

All applications must be received by 5pm, Monday 29th September 2014

We are working towards equal opportunities and welcome applications from all sections of the community. We are committed to safeguarding the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.



Here at OCR, we work with you and employers to create relevant and skill-based qualifications. They can help empower your learners to develop the skills they need for future employment and life.

Our range of vocational qualifications is proven to not only support people's education, but also raise their confidence and aspirations for the future.

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FE Week Sudoku challenge

How to play: Fill in all blank squares making sure that each row, column and 3 by 3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9

1			8		5			3
6		3				2		8
	8			4			9	
		4	9		6	7		
	6						3	
		5	1		4	9		
	1			7			4	
7		9				8		5
4			3	1				2

Difficulty:
EASY

		2			6	7	8	
			9		8			6
	8		7			3		
	5							8
7			3		4			1
4							2	
		5			7		6	
2			8		5			
	1	9	4			5		

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Solutions:
Next week

Last Week's solutions

4	8	7	3	5	6	1	2	9
6	9	5	1	4	2	8	7	3
3	1	2	8	7	9	6	5	4
5	4	6	7	2	8	3	9	1
8	2	1	6	9	3	7	4	5
9	7	3	5	1	4	2	8	6
7	3	9	4	8	1	5	6	2
2	6	8	9	3	5	4	1	7
1	5	4	2	6	7	9	3	8

Difficulty:
EASY

3	8	5	4	1	7	6	9	2
7	4	6	3	9	2	5	8	1
9	1	2	6	8	5	7	3	4
5	7	3	9	6	1	2	4	8
6	2	1	7	4	8	3	5	9
8	9	4	5	2	3	1	6	7
4	6	7	2	5	9	8	1	3
2	5	8	1	3	4	9	7	6
1	3	9	8	7	6	4	2	5

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Spot the difference
to WIN an FE Week mug!



Spot five differences. First correct entry wins an FE Week mug. Text your name and picture of your completed spot the difference to 07969 166 374.

This week's winner is Donna Simmonds, director of Cornwall's Seahorse Associates Consultancy and Training